

ONCE AGAIN Wycombe Wanderers produced that infuriating habit of passing up scoring chances with regular monotony in this rather typical end-of-the-season clash on Saturday evening.

The conditions were far from suitable for playing good football. A swirling wind made ball control almost impossible, with dust storms blowing end from end. Also, the pitch was bone hard, which was another hazard.

However, taking all these drawbacks into account on the run of play Wanderers should have returned richer by two points.

They were never in any danger of conceding the game and created four clear-cut scoring chances to Barking's solitary opening.

Wycombe's party had, earlier in the day, attended the Amateur Cup final at Wembley where Sid Cann's Sutton failed to take the trophy after dominating the opening stages against North Shields.

For the second consecutive Isthmian League match Wycombe keeper John Maskell had hardly any danger to contend with as Wanderers defence easily contained the Barking raids.

But, Wycombe's usual habit of neat approach work being wasted by shoddy shooting in the 18-yard area let Barking off the hook.

At the back Julian Lailey gave another impeccable display of defensive zone cover always on the alert for the first signs of danger and acting quickly and intelligently to snuff out the trouble.

Lailey is without a doubt the finest defensive cover in the league. It will be interesting to note when Charles Hughes announces his next international squad whether Lailey is included.

Hughes would, indeed, be foolish to leave out such a talented wing-half. On Saturday he was in supreme form and by far the outstanding player on the field.

Slater, on Wanderers' left-wing, struggled to get in contact with the game and Faulkner was guilty of passing up one glorious opening by heading over the top of an open goal.

This lack of sharpness in front of goal has held Wanderers back all season. They have missed many promising openings because no-one will take the responsibility of shooting once inside the opponents box.

On occasions Wycombe have produced the "killer instinct" which is so vital if they are to succeed. But, in many matches, especially against inferior opposition, Wycombe give the impression that it's just a practice game.

This was rather the case at Barking. Openings were being created easily enough but were just not being converted due to lack of concentration.